

HANDBOOK OF PLASMA  
IMMERSION ION  
IMPLANTATION  
AND DEPOSITION



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# HANDBOOK OF PLASMA IMMERSION ION IMPLANTATION AND DEPOSITION

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Edited by

**André Anders**

Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory



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# CONTENTS

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<b>Contributors</b>	<b>xv</b>
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<b>Preface</b>	<b>xix</b>
----------------	------------

<b>1 Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
-----------------------	----------

*John R. Conrad*

- 1.1 Concept of Plasma Immersion Ion Implantation / 2
- 1.2 Comparison of Traditional Ion Beam Implantation with Plasma Immersion Ion Implantation / 3
- 1.3 Combining Plasma Immersion Ion Implantation with Deposition / 6
- 1.4 Development of the Basic Science of Ion Implantation / 7
- 1.5 Development of Conventional Beamline Ion Implantation / 9
- 1.6 History of the Development of Plasma Immersion Ion Implantation / 11
- 1.7 Commercial Applications of PIII&D / 20
- 1.8 Speculation on Future Developments in PIII / 22

## PART I FUNDAMENTALS

<b>2 Fundamentals of Plasmas and Sheaths</b>	<b>29</b>
--	-----------

*Michael A. Lieberman*

- 2.1 Plasmas / 38
  - 2.1.1 Basic Plasma Equations and Equilibrium / 38
  - 2.1.2 Collisions / 52
  - 2.1.3 Plasma Dynamics / 64
  - 2.1.4 Diffusion and Transport / 77
  - 2.1.5 Discharge Equilibrium / 92

2.2 Sheaths / 104

2.2.1 Basic Concepts and Equations / 104

2.2.2 Bohm Sheath Criterion / 107

2.2.3 High-Voltage Sheaths / 115

**3 Ion Implantation and Thin-Film Deposition**

**125**

*Michael Nastasi, Wolfhard Möller, and Wolfgang Ensinger*

3.1 Ion–Solid Interaction / 125

3.1.1 Introduction / 125

3.1.2 Basic Principles / 126

3.1.3 Ion Stopping / 140

3.1.4 Ion Range Calculations / 145

3.1.5 Radiation Damage / 149

3.1.6 Thermal Spikes / 150

3.1.7 Radiation-Enhanced Diffusion / 151

3.1.8 Sputtering / 155

3.1.9 Distribution of Implanted Atoms / 159

3.1.10 Ion–Solid Simulations / 161

3.1.11 Ion Mixing / 167

3.2 Ion-Assisted Thin-Film Growth / 173

3.2.1 Introduction / 173

3.2.2 Film Stoichiometry / 177

3.2.3 Film Growth and Structure / 181

3.2.4 Film Properties / 209

**4 Fundamentals of Plasma Immersion Ion  
Implantation and Deposition**

**243**

*Blake P. Wood, Donald J. Rej, André Anders, Ian G. Brown,  
Richard J. Faehl, Shamim M. Malik, and Carter P. Munson*

4.1 Introduction / 243

4.2 Transient Sheaths / 246

4.2.1 Introduction to Transient Sheaths / 246

4.2.2 Collisionless Sheath Model / 247

4.2.3 Extensions to the Collisionless Sheath Model / 249

4.3 Secondary Electron Emission / 263

4.4 Implantation in Pipes and Holes / 268

4.5 Implant Uniformity and Retained Dose / 271

4.6 Implantation of Nonconducting Materials / 275

- 4.7 Implantation at Elevated Temperatures / 277
- 4.8 Plasma Immersion Ion Implantation with Deposition / 281
  - 4.8.1 Introduction / 281
  - 4.8.2 Plasma Immersion Ion Implantation and Deposition with Cathodic Arc Plasmas / 282
  - 4.8.3 Sacrificial Layers / 288
  - 4.8.4 Ion Mixing and Layer Adhesion / 291
  - 4.8.5 PIIID with Multielement Metal Plasmas / 292
  - 4.8.6 PIIID in the Presence of Reactive Gases / 292
- 4.9 Electrical System Requirements / 293

## **5 Materials Characterization and Testing Methods—A Brief Survey**

**303**

*Kevin C. Walter, Kumar Sridharan, and Michael Nastasi*

- 5.1 Introduction / 303
- 5.2 Materials Characterization of Surfaces Treated by Plasma Immersion Ion Implantation / 304
  - 5.2.1 Retained Ion Dose, Implanted Ion Distribution, and Composition of the Implanted Region / 304
  - 5.2.2 Precipitates or Secondary Phase Formation / 315
  - 5.2.3 Surface Roughness / 319
- 5.3 Materials Characterization of Coatings Synthesized by Plasma Immersion Ion Implantation and Deposition / 320
  - 5.3.1 Composition / 320
  - 5.3.2 Crystallinity / 321
  - 5.3.3 Morphology / 321
  - 5.3.4 Thickness and Index of Refraction: Ellipsometry / 321
- 5.4 Materials Testing of Surfaces Treated by Plasma Immersion Ion Implantation / 322
  - 5.4.1 Hardness and Elastic Modulus / 322
  - 5.4.2 Tribological Testing / 324
  - 5.4.3 Corrosion Testing / 328
- 5.5 Materials Testing of Coatings Synthesized by Plasma Immersion Ion Implantation and Deposition / 332
  - 5.5.1 Adhesion / 332
  - 5.5.2 Stress / 334
  - 5.5.3 Resistivity / 334

## PART II TECHNOLOGY

**6 Design of a PIII&D Processing Chamber 343**

*Jesse Matossian, George A. Collins, Paul K. Chu,  
Carter P. Munson, and Joseph V. Mantese*

- 6.1 Introduction / 343
- 6.2 Background / 344
- 6.3 General Trends for Chamber Size, Voltage, and Processing Power / 345
- 6.4 Design Guidelines and Scaling Relationships for PIII&D Chambers / 350
  - 6.4.1 Chamber Size / 350
  - 6.4.2 Chamber Structure / 353
  - 6.4.3 Chamber Material / 356
- 6.5 Vacuum Pumps / 356
  - 6.5.1 Pumping Stages / 356
  - 6.5.2 Relation of Pumping Speed, Outgassing, and Pressure / 357
  - 6.5.3 Determination of the High-Vacuum Pumping Speed / 358
  - 6.5.4 Determination of High-Vacuum Gas Throughput / 360
  - 6.5.5 Types of High-Vacuum Pumps / 361
- 6.6 Fixtures / 364
  - 6.6.1 Fixture Types / 364
  - 6.6.2 Design, Electrical Insulation, and Weight Capacity of Fixtures / 364
- 6.7 Temperature Control and Shielding of Chamber Walls / 367
  - 6.7.1 Heating and Cooling of Chamber Walls / 367
  - 6.7.2 PIII&D with Chamber Walls at Elevated Temperature / 369
  - 6.7.3 Coating Protection by Internal Shields / 371
  - 6.7.4 X-ray Shielding / 372
- 6.8 Process Diagnostics and Control / 374
  - 6.8.1 In Situ Diagnostics / 374
  - 6.8.2 Process Control of a PIII&D Facility / 375

**7 Plasma Sources 381**

*André Anders, Jacques Pelletier, Dan M. Goebel, Blake P. Wood,  
Ian G. Brown, Wolfgang Ensinger, and Michel Tuszewski*

- 7.1 Introduction and Overview / 381
- 7.2 Thermionic Discharges and Magnetic Multipole Confinement / 384
  - 7.2.1 Introduction / 384
  - 7.2.2 Thermionic Discharge Cathodes / 386
  - 7.2.3 Discharges Confined by Multipole Magnetic Fields / 389



- 7.3 Pulsed High-Voltage Glow Discharge / 393
  - 7.3.1 Unassisted Discharge / 393
  - 7.3.2 Assisted Discharge / 396
- 7.4 Capacitively Coupled RF Plasma Sources / 398
  - 7.4.1 Introduction / 398
  - 7.4.2 Capacitive Source Configuration / 398
  - 7.4.3 Plasma Parameters / 400
  - 7.4.4 DC Self-Bias / 401
  - 7.4.5 Electron Heating Mechanisms / 403
- 7.5 Inductively Coupled RF Plasma Sources / 403
  - 7.5.1 Introduction / 403
  - 7.5.2 Inductively Coupled Plasma Configurations / 403
  - 7.5.3 Induction Coupling / 404
  - 7.5.4 Plasma Parameters / 406
  - 7.5.5 Pulsed Operation / 408
- 7.6 Microwave Plasma Sources / 409
  - 7.6.1 Specificity and Classification of Microwave Plasma Sources / 409
  - 7.6.2 Microwave Circuit of a Plasma System / 411
  - 7.6.3 Design and Characteristics of Microwave Plasma Sources / 412
  - 7.6.4 Scale-Up of Microwave Plasma Sources / 423
  - 7.6.5 Perspectives for Microwave Discharges and Multipole Plasmas in PIII&D / 428
- 7.7 Remote Gas Plasma Sources / 430
  - 7.7.1 Introduction / 430
  - 7.7.2 Streaming Plasma from a Filament Source / 430
  - 7.7.3 End-Hall Plasma Source / 430
  - 7.7.4 Constricted Plasma Source / 432
- 7.8 Cathodic Arc Metal Plasma Sources and Macroparticle Filters / 435
  - 7.8.1 Introduction / 435
  - 7.8.2 Short-Pulse Cathodic Arc Plasma Sources / 435
  - 7.8.3 Long-Pulse and DC Cathodic Arc Plasma Sources / 437
  - 7.8.4 Macroparticle Filtering / 440
- 7.9 Other Sources of Plasma and Vapor / 444
  - 7.9.1 Spotless Cathodic Arcs / 444
  - 7.9.2 Anodic Vacuum Arcs / 444
  - 7.9.3 Laser Plasma Source / 446
  - 7.9.4 Sputtering / 446
  - 7.9.5 Thermal and Electron Beam Evaporation / 451

## **8 Pulser Technology** **467**

*Dan M. Goebel, Richard J. Adler, Dexter F. Beals,  
and William A. Reass*

- 8.1 General Design Considerations for PIII&D Pulsers / 467
  - 8.1.1 Introduction / 467
  - 8.1.2 Pulser Impedance / 470
  - 8.1.3 Pulser Circuits / 472
- 8.2 Hard-Tube Pulsers / 477
  - 8.2.1 Introduction: Advantages of Hard-Tubes Pulsers / 477
  - 8.2.2 Hard-Vacuum-Tube Types / 477
  - 8.2.3 Hard-Tube Modulator Circuits / 479
- 8.3 Pulsers Based on Thyratrons with Pulse-Forming Networks / 485
  - 8.3.1 Introduction: Advantages of Thyatron Switches / 485
  - 8.3.2 Combining Thyratrons and Pulse-Forming Networks / 486
  - 8.3.3 Characteristics of Pulse-Forming Networks / 487
- 8.4 Solid-State Modulators / 492
  - 8.4.1 Introduction: Advantages of Solid-State Modulators / 492
  - 8.4.2 Circuits for High-Power Solid-State Pulsers / 493
  - 8.4.3 Insulated-Gate Bipolar Transistors / 494
  - 8.4.4 Thyristors (SCR) / 494
  - 8.4.5 Gate Turn-Off Devices / 495
  - 8.4.6 Metal-Oxide-Semiconductor  
Field Effect Transistors / 495
  - 8.4.7 Bipolar Transistors / 496
  - 8.4.8 Power Considerations and Limitations of  
Solid-State Devices / 496
  - 8.4.9 Protection and Implementation of Solid-State Devices / 498
  - 8.4.10 Device Drive Circuits / 500
- 8.5 Pulse Transformer Design for PIII&D / 501
  - 8.5.1 Introduction: Use of Pulse Transformers / 501
  - 8.5.2 Transformer Design / 502
  - 8.5.3 Example of Empire Hard Chrome Pulser / 506
  - 8.5.4 General-Purpose IGBT/Transformer Pulser / 506
  - 8.5.5 Hard-Tube/Transformer Pulser / 509
  - 8.5.6 High-Voltage/Transformer Pulser / 509

## **9 Health and Safety Issues Related to PIII&D** **515**

*Dexter F. Beals, André Anders, and Jesse Matossian*

- 9.1 Introduction / 515
- 9.2 Electrical Safety / 516

- 9.2.1 Voltage, Current, and Stored Energy / 516
- 9.2.2 Capacitively Stored Energy / 516
- 9.2.3 Inductively Stored Energy / 518
- 9.2.4 Safety Precautions Related to Stored Energy / 519
- 9.2.5 Lockout and Tagout Procedures / 519
- 9.2.6 Safety Grounding Practices / 520
- 9.2.7 Equipment Grounding / 521
- 9.2.8 Equipment Interlocks and Safety Interlock Systems / 523
- 9.3 Electromagnetic Radiation Safety / 524
  - 9.3.1 Some Definitions and Relevant Considerations / 524
  - 9.3.2 Nonionizing Radiation / 525
  - 9.3.3 Ionizing Radiation / 531
- 9.4 Vacuum and Chamber Safety / 539
  - 9.4.1 Implosion Hazards / 539
  - 9.4.2 Chamber Entry and Confined Space Hazards / 540
  - 9.4.3 Compressed Gas Containers / 541
- 9.5 Chemical Safety / 542
  - 9.5.1 Classification of Chemicals and Sources of Information / 542
  - 9.5.2 Solvents and Other Liquids / 542
  - 9.5.3 Gases and Fumes / 544
  - 9.5.4 Cryogenics / 549

## PART III APPLICATIONS

### **10 Nonsemiconductor Applications of PIII&D** **553**

*Kumar Sridharan, Simone Anders, Michael Nastasi,  
Kevin C. Walter, André Anders, Othon R. Monteiro,  
and Wolfgang Ensinger*

- 10.1 Reduction of Wear and Corrosion / 553
  - 10.1.1 Introduction / 553
  - 10.1.2 Improvements of Wear Resistance / 555
  - 10.1.3 Improvements of Corrosion Resistance / 559
  - 10.1.4 Results of Industrial Field Tests / 566
- 10.2 Diamondlike Carbon Coatings / 569
  - 10.2.1 Introduction to Hard Carbon Films / 569
  - 10.2.2 Preparation of DLC by PIIID / 570
  - 10.2.3 Enhancement of Adhesion of DLC Coatings / 571
  - 10.2.4 Microstructure and Characterization of DLC Coatings / 571
  - 10.2.5 Properties of DLC Coatings / 573

**xii** CONTENTS

- 10.3 Hydrogen-Free Hard Carbon Films (a-C Films) / 578
  - 10.3.1 Synthesis of a-C Films / 578
  - 10.3.2 Deposition and Properties of a-C Films Synthesized by Cathodic Arc Carbon Plasmas / 579
  - 10.3.3 Amorphous Hard Carbon for Tribological Applications in the Magnetic Storage Industry / 587
- 10.4 Deposition of Other Protective Coatings / 595
  - 10.4.1 Plasma Immersion Ion Implantation in Combination with Thin-Film Deposition / 595
  - 10.4.2 Postdeposition PIII Treatment of Coatings / 596
  - 10.4.3 Deposition and PIII Treatment as In-Line Process / 600
  - 10.4.4 Triode Sputter Deposition / 606
  - 10.4.5 Metal Plasma Immersion Ion Implantation and Deposition / 609
- 10.5 Modification of Battery Electrodes / 614
  - 10.5.1 Introduction / 614
  - 10.5.2 Nickel Alkaline–Electrolyte Cells / 615
  - 10.5.3 Lithium Cells / 616
  - 10.5.4 Lead Acid Cells / 619
- 10.6 Modification of Polymer Surfaces / 621
  - 10.6.1 Introduction / 621
  - 10.6.2 Modification of the Wettability of Polystyrene Surfaces / 622
  - 10.6.3 Protection of Polymers from Severe Oxidizing Environments / 622
  - 10.6.4 Improvement of Polymer Wear Resistance by Mesh-Assisted PIII / 623

**11 Semiconductor Applications**

**637**

*Paul K. Chu, Nathan W. Cheung, Chung Chan, Bunji Mizuno, and Othon R. Monteiro*

- 11.1 Introduction / 637
- 11.2 Shallow Junction Formation / 639
  - 11.2.1 Shallow Junctions Formed by PIII / 639
  - 11.2.2 Plasma Immersion Ion Implantation of  $\text{BF}_3/\text{SiF}_4$  / 641
  - 11.2.3 Doping Using Hydrides / 647
  - 11.2.4 Contamination Studies / 648
- 11.3 Flat-Panel Displays / 651
- 11.4 Silicon-on-Insulator Fabrication / 652
  - 11.4.1 Introduction to SOI Fabrication Processes / 653

11.4.2	SPIMOX (Separation by Plasma Implantation of Oxygen) / 653	
11.4.3	SPIMOX Using a Water Plasma / 657	
11.4.4	Ion-Cut and Bonded SOI / 658	
11.5	Microcavity Engineering / 663	
11.5.1	Gettering Effects / 663	
11.5.2	Buried Light-Emitting Porous Silicon / 665	
11.6	Trench Doping / 667	
11.7	Metallization Technology for Deep Trench Filling / 669	
11.8	Conclusions / 673	
<b>Appendix A</b>	<b>Survey of PIII&amp;D Intellectual Property</b>	<b>683</b>
	<i>Jesse Matossian</i>	
A.1	Introduction / 683	
A.2	Summary / 684	
A.3	Detailed Listing of the Worldwide Issued Patents / 685	
<b>Appendix B</b>	<b>Constants and Formula</b>	<b>705</b>
<b>Appendix C</b>	<b>Frequently Used Acronyms</b>	<b>711</b>
<b>Appendix D</b>	<b>About the Authors</b>	<b>715</b>
<b>Index</b>		<b>727</b>



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# PREFACE

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Plasma processing of materials has matured in recent decades at an incredible speed. Conventional techniques have been upscaled, in situ monitoring and computer-aided feedback controls have become standard, and new processing methods have been invented. The turn of the millennium is a welcome occasion to step back for a moment from the fast pace of day-to-day operation of research, development, and high-tech production. Before we “immerse” ourselves into technology details, let’s step back and have a look at the big picture. Materials research and development is a cornerstone of modern industry; it provides enabling technologies for the information age. There would be no high-speed computing, wide bandwidth network connections, wireless communication, and the like without modern materials technologies. Innovative process solutions and materials are also developed for the more traditional areas in manufacturing and transportation, including the space and automotive industry. At the same time, scientists, engineers, and economists are today more aware than ever of the environmental impact of modern technologies. In fact, the need to replace technologies that have severe negative environmental impact has become a major driving force for the development of better alternatives.

One of the emerging technologies is plasma immersion ion implantation (PIII), also known as plasma source ion implantation (PSII) or plasma-based ion implantation (PBII). In order to appreciate PIII, we will start with a quick comparison with conventional beamline ion implantation. Energetic ion beams are obtained from ion beam sources by extracting ions from a plasma and accelerating them using the electric field across a single or multiple aperture grid system. The electric potential difference between the grids is high: often tens or hundreds of kilovolts, and sometimes the ion energy is further increased to the mega-electron-volt range utilizing accelerator stages. The ion beam cross section is usually small (compared to the substrate area), with three important consequences: (1) feasibility of magnetic ion charge and mass separation, (2) the need for scanning the beam across the surface area to obtain large implantation areas with sufficient dose uniformity, and (3) low dose rates and long processing times. PIII, in contrast, is a very different approach that leads to opposite features. The substrate to be implanted is immersed in the processing plasma, and negative high-voltage pulses are applied so as to form a

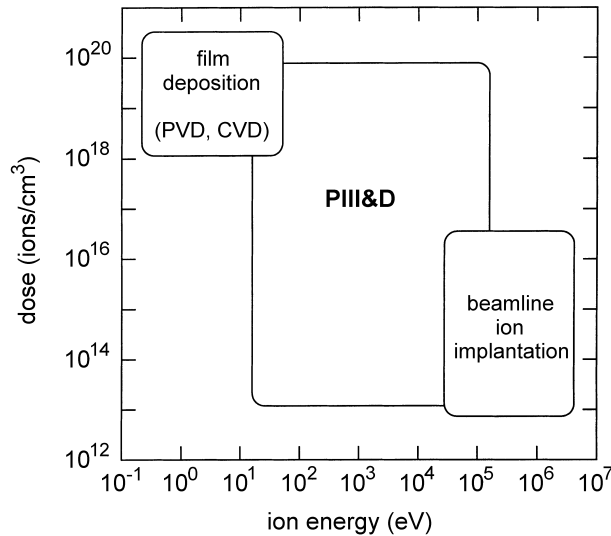
conformal electric sheath (space charge layer) between the substrate and the plasma. Ions located in or entering the sheath from the plasma side are accelerated by the sheath's electric field. They are implanted into the substrate when they impact the substrate. The fascinating idea of this approach is to eliminate the need for ion beam extraction, focusing, transport, scanning, and other manipulation. These are some of the advantages of PIII. Other features, including drawbacks and limitations, will be discussed in detail in this handbook.

Plasma calculations by Melvin Widner at Oak Ridge National Laboratory in the 1960s and the pioneering work of Richard Adler at Mission Research Corporation in the early 1980s prepared the field. However, it was the work of John Conrad and co-workers at the University of Wisconsin at Madison that was pivotal for the birth and recognition of the PIII concept. They reported on the first plasma immersion ion implantation results with nitrogen plasmas in 1986. Nitrogen plasmas were dominant in the early years because one could form subsurface nitrides at relatively low temperatures with excellent mechanical and chemical properties. In the following years, the physical basis has been developed by a number of groups, and new applications have been explored. I'm grateful that John agreed to write the first chapter of this handbook, describing the early development of PIII and its relation to other techniques, in particular to ion nitriding. He puts the development of PIII&D in a historical perspective by comparing it with traditional beamline ion implantation. He outlines the physics and original applications of PIII.

The early PIII work used gaseous plasmas such as nitrogen plasmas. By extending PIII to condensable (metal or organometallic) plasmas and vapors, the field was expanded from pure ion implantation to thin-film deposition. As a consequence, the letter *D* for deposition was included in the acronym, now PIII&D. The title of this handbook, plasma immersion ion implantation *and deposition*, reflects this development.

If condensable plasma species such as metal ions are involved, this concept translates into ion implantation and ion deposition phases. Pulsing the substrate implies high-energy phases (bias pulse on, ion implantation) and low-energy phases (bias pulse off, ion deposition). Figure 1 illustrates the hybrid character of PIII&D. In general, PIII&D equipment and processes may be operated in a pure plasma immersion ion implantation (PIII) mode or a pure plasma immersion ion deposition (PIID) mode (the latter has existed before PIII was invented, as pointed out in Chapter 1). The following acronyms are used in this book: PIII for plasma immersion ion implantation with gaseous plasmas, PIID for plasma immersion ion implantation and deposition with condensable, film-forming plasmas and vapors, and PIII&D when generically referring to both.

Today, at the turn of the millennium, PIII&D in its various forms has become a mature technology with first applications of industrial size. Our knowledge has been compiled and described in several book chapters, and about 1000 articles have been published in a variety of scientific journals.



**Figure 1** Relation of PIII&D to ion implantation and thin-film deposition.

Several International Workshops on Plasma-Based Ion Implantation have demonstrated the vitality of the field. The time has come to consolidate the work in a single monograph dedicated to this field; this handbook describes the PIII&D work from its beginnings to the end of the twentieth century.

Plasma physicists, materials scientists, chemists, pulse-power engineers, and many others have contributed to the development of PIII&D, a field at the interface of several scientific disciplines. It seemed mandatory to include a rather large number of authors and draw from their different and complementary experience and expertise.

This book is composed of three parts: *Fundamentals*, *Technology*, and *Applications*. In Part I, the basics of plasmas and plasma sheaths are introduced by Michael Lieberman. Background information on ion implantation and thin-film formation is provided in Chapter 3, coordinated by Michael Nastasi. In Chapter 4, the fundamental processes of PIII and their extension to PIIID are introduced by Blake Wood and co-authors. This chapter is the core of the handbook; it is not coincidental that its title is practically identical with the title of the Handbook. If you are familiar with the basics of plasmas, sheaths, ion implantation and thin-film deposition, and you would like to learn about PIII&D, I would recommend that you go straight to Chapter 4. Chapter 5, coordinated by Kevin Walter, gives an overview of materials analysis and testing techniques. This chapter will be found useful by those who want to be reminded of the various methods for determining the qualitative and quantitative effects of PIII&D treatment. Of course, all of the chapters contain numerous references that allow the reader to probe deeper in the original literature. Chapter 5 concludes the fundamentals part of this handbook.

In Part II, Jesse Matossian and co-authors discuss design issues of PIII&D processing chambers, process control, part handling, and other information relevant to the practical design and use of PIII&D vacuum equipment. In Chapter 7, coordinated by myself, plasma sources and the technical means of plasma production and control are discussed. Chapter 8, coordinated by Dan Goebel, deals with the pulser technology necessary to achieve suitable substrate bias pulses. The *Technology* part is concluded by Chapter 9, coordinated by Dexter Beals, in which safety and health issues are discussed that are related to the variety of PIII&D processes.

Part III starts with nonsemiconductor applications such as the reduction of wear and corrosion of PIII-treated workpieces, the core application of PIII in its early years. Chapter 10, coordinated by Kumar Sridharan, also includes applications of PIIID such as the deposition of compound layers and fine-tuned hard amorphous (diamondlike) carbon films. Finally, Chapter 11, coordinated by Paul Chu, describes modern applications in semiconductor research and industry such as the PIII formation of ultrashallow junctions.

Twenty-nine distinguished authors from six countries have contributed to this book. I feel privileged that I had the opportunity to work with them and that I was given the honor of coordinating and editing this handbook. The authors are portrayed in short biographies compiled in Appendix D.

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